

been an unshakeable champion for civil rights and for all students who want a fair shake in their education. This would be the second time she serves as Assistant Secretary, so she has the experience, the leadership, and the dedication to stand up for students from all walks of life—something sorely lacking under the previous administration.

I look forward to confirming her nomination.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### ENERGY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Federal Government's own analysts of the energy sector are predicting that this winter American families could face home heating bills that are 54 percent higher than last year—54 percent higher than just last year. On average, the price for our households running on natural gas is expected to jump 30 percent. For homes that use propane, a different assessment says the forecast looks like "propane-market Armageddon."

As the head of one aid organization put it, "After the beating that people have taken in the pandemic, it's like: What's next?" What is next? Well, astonishingly, what is next is yet another reckless taxing-and-spending spree from Washington Democrats, including more inflationary spending to push costs even higher and more anti-domestic-energy taxes and regulations that would only compound these problems.

That includes new, crushing taxes aimed at domestic natural gas production. They want to reprise the Obama administration's War on Coal. But this time the target is also—in addition to coal, the target is also the natural gas that provides electricity for our communities and heats families' homes. And then there are the new mandates and new penalties that are essentially designed to make 49 States' electrical grids move more in the direction of California's—paying higher costs for less reliable power.

Now, unfortunately, this has been the Biden administration's playbook going back to the very beginning. Remember, killing the Keystone XL Pipeline and thousands of American jobs was a day one—a day one—priority. Then it was

the ban on new development of domestic energy reserves and the hasty mission to rejoin the toothless Paris climate accords, where virtually nobody—nobody—but America seems to be remotely interested in achieving their nonbinding "commitments."

So for all the leftwing's apparent urgency to pass radical climate policy, they seem not to care much about tackling the biggest sources of the world's carbon emissions. The so-called international community that had scraped together the failed Paris deal could only get the world's most prolific polluter, that is, China, to agree—now, listen to this—to curb its increase in emissions 9 years from now. That is all they got out of China: an agreement to curb their emissions 9 years from now.

That is what this administration calls a good deal? America signs up for self-inflicted pain today, and China maybe—maybe—thinks about beginning to follow suit in another decade.

So, listen, China continues to produce more than one-fourth—one-fourth—of the world's carbon output, roughly 2½ times as much as the United States.

Instead of fighting back against our adversaries, Democrats' reckless taxing-and-spending spree would just hand-deliver them one big gift right after another, like the big new tax hikes on American businesses that would leave our industries paying higher tax rates than businesses in communist China; like doubling down on the anti-energy policies that already have the Biden administration going hat in hand to Russia and OPEC and begging them to up their own production for us.

As our colleague Senator BARRASSO pointed out yesterday, before the Biden administration took over, America was enjoying energy independence for the first time in seven decades. Before the Biden administration took over, America was enjoying energy independence for the first time in seven decades, but now, we are heading the other way. America has doubled our oil purchases from Russia on President Biden's watch. We are twice as dependent on Russian oil today as we were before this administration took power. And President Biden green-lighted Putin's new gas pipeline that will give Moscow even more leverage over the European continent.

So Democrats want our Nation on a path toward less energy independence and higher costs for working families. Their reckless taxing-and-spending spree would make it all dramatically worse.

#### BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on another matter, our country would be much better off if our Democratic colleagues shelved their radical wish list and focused on their fundamental responsibilities as a one-party government. But while they continue to spin

their wheels negotiating this reckless taxing-and-spending spree, their most basic jobs are being neglected.

This week, already months behind the usual pace, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee released partisan drafts of spending bills that are dead on arrival. They spend too much. They cut our longstanding taxpayer protections like the Hyde amendment. They shortchange our national defense even as we face serious and growing threats from terrorism and from major competitors like China and Russia. Most of these bills can't earn 50 votes, much less 60.

When Republicans ran the Senate, by this time of year, we had had bipartisan frameworks in hand for months, and we were hammering out the fine details across the aisle. Our Democratic colleagues are way, way behind schedule, with no solution in sight.

It is also looking increasingly likely that we will reach Veterans Day before the Senate takes up the National Defense Authorization Act—now, never mind that this year's bill earned overwhelming, bipartisan support in committee; never mind that it represents this body's single most important opportunity to influence national security. Our troops are being put in the back seat so the socialists can drive the car.

At the end of the month, because House liberals still cannot get their act together and pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill, which the Senate passed months ago, major highway projects and American workers are scheduled to be thrown into limbo.

Our Democratic colleagues have unified control of the government—unified control of the government. The country needs them to stop arguing among themselves over how to waste trillions of dollars and get about executing their most basic jobs.

#### VOTING RIGHTS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on one final matter, later today, the Democratic leader will have the Senate vote on the latest iteration of his party's election takeover scheme.

Frankly, I have just about lost count of how many times our Democratic colleagues have tried to truss up the same takeover with new trappings. For multiple years running, Washington Democrats have offered a rotating merry-go-round of rationale to explain why they need to federalize voting laws and take over all of America's elections themselves, but every time they try this shtick in the Senate, it falls flat. Today will be no exception.

This latest umpteenth iteration is only a compromise in the sense that the left and the far left argued among themselves about exactly how much power to grab and in which areas. This latest bill still subjects popular, commonsense election integrity protections like voter ID to the whims of